

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. Canceled.
2. (New) A specimen observing method, comprising the steps of:
irradiating a specimen supplied with a negative voltage with an electron beam to generate secondary electrons from the specimen,
deflecting and detecting the generated secondary electrons to obtain a specimen image on the basis of the detected secondary electrons, and
adjusting the negative voltage so as to cancel charge-up of the specimen.
3. (New) A specimen observing method according to claim 2, wherein the step of adjusting the negative voltage is so performed that the specimen image has a given image contrast.
4. (New) A specimen observing method according to claim 2, wherein the step of adjusting the voltage is performed while monitoring an output of a secondary electron detector detecting the generated secondary electrons so that the output shows a maximum.
5. (New) A specimen observing method, comprising the steps of:
irradiating a specimen supplied with a negative voltage with an electron beam to generate secondary electrons from the specimen,
deflecting and detecting the generated secondary electrons to obtain a specimen image on the basis of the detected secondary electrons, and
adjusting the negative voltage while monitoring an output of a secondary electron detector detecting the secondary electrons to determine a value of the negative voltage at which the output has a maximum value.

6. (New) A scanning electron microscope which comprises:
an electron source emitting a primary electron beam,
a focusing lens focusing the primary electron beam,
a deflector deflecting the primary electron beam toward the specimen beam to
irradiate a specimen with the focused primary electron beam so as to generate secondary
electrons from the specimen;
a detector detecting the secondary electrons;
a negative voltage supplying source supplying the specimen with a negative
voltage, and
a controller adjusting the negative voltage to determine a value thereof at which
the output shows a maximum.

7. (New) A scanning electron microscope according to claim 6, wherein the
secondary electron detector comprises a secondary electron multiplier and the controller adjusts
the negative voltage while monitoring an output of the secondary electron multiplier.